

Cantaloupe

History

Cantaloupe has been growing since ancient times in the Nile River Valley in Egypt. It likely first originated in the Middle East or India, but ancient Egyptians and Romans are known to have grown the melon.

The US cantaloupe is frequently called muskmelon. However, muskmelon is a family of melon that includes the cantaloupe, honeydew, and casaba melon. Cantaloupe is the most popular type of muskmelon. Today, they are produced in California, Arizona, and Texas and are available throughout the year, but the harvesting season peaks in the summer.

Fruit Science

Cantaloupe does not ripen after it is picked, so once a cantaloupe is removed from the vine it will not sweeten any further. Many people believe that allowing the cantaloupe to ripen on a countertop will increase the sweetness, but that is not true! The melon will become softer and juicier if not cut and served after being picked. Cantaloupe should not sit at room temperature for more than four days.



Fun Facts

- Cantaloupe is called “rockmelon” in Australia
- Cantaloupe can be pureed and used in cold soup, sorbet, ice cream, or smoothies
- When choosing a cantaloupe use your nose- pick the cantaloupe that has a sweet smell
- It takes cantaloupes 3-4 months to grow before they are mature enough to be picked
- Cantaloupes received their name from Cantalupo, Italy where they were cultivated in the 1700s
- Cantaloupes are a good source of vitamin C and A
- Cantaloupes are related to watermelon, honeydew, cucumbers, pumpkins, and squash



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